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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/633,600	08/05/2003	Michael Meyer	095309.52645US	4821
23911	7590	10/01/2004	EXAMINER	
CROWELL & MORING LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP P.O. BOX 14300 WASHINGTON, DC 20044-4300			LA, ANH V	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2636	

DATE MAILED: 10/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AK

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/633,600

Applicant(s)

MEYER ET AL.

Examiner

Anh V La

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/5/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the first occupant detection device and the third occupant device must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

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2. The drawing is objected to because the only one figure should be labeled as - - Figure 1--.

3. The claims are objected to because there are many typographical errors. In claims 7-10, line 1, the phrases "The occupant detection" should be changed to - -The method--.

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-4 and 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kuboki.

Regarding claims 1 and 6, Kuboki discloses an occupant detection system/method for a motor vehicle comprising a first occupant detection device 32 which is arranged in a vehicle seat 2, a second occupant detection device 34, wherein the second occupant detection device comprises a first electrode (41, 42 of device 32) arranged in the vehicle seat and a second electrode (41, 42 of 34) arranged in a foot well associated with the vehicle seat, an electrical coupler variable (9, 35, 38) associated with the two electrodes is determined by means of an electrical field applied between the electrodes and the electrical coupler variable and a variable which is

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determined by the first occupant detection device are used to determine whether the vehicle occupant is a child, whose legs do not extend to the vehicle floor or whether the vehicle occupant is an occupant whose legs extend to the vehicle floor (see figures 7-13).

Regarding claims 2 and 7, Kuboki discloses an electrical capacitance which is associated with a capacitor formed by the first electrode (41, 42 of device 32) arranged in the seat and the second electrode (41, 42 of 34) arranged in the foot well.

Regarding claims 3 and 8, Kuboki discloses the first electrode (41, 42 of device 32) being a part of the first occupant detection device (see figures 7-13).

Regarding claims 4 and 9, Kuboki discloses the second electrode (41, 42 of device 34) being a part of a third occupant detection device which is arranged in the foot well (see figures 7-13).

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 5 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuboki.

Regarding claims 5 and 10, Kuboki discloses all the claimed subject matter as set forth above in the rejection of claim 3, but does not disclose the first electrode being

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arranged in a region within about 2 cm below the seat surface. However, it would have been obvious to have the first electrode being arranged in a region within about 2 cm below the seat surface since it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation.

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

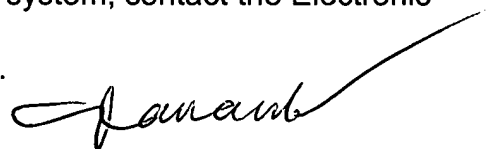
Vollmer, Kithil, Gray, and Breed teach vehicle occupant sensing systems.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anh V La whose telephone number is (571) 272-2970. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri from 9:30am to 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffery Hofsass can be reached on (571) 272-2981. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



ANH V. LA
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Anh V La
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2636

AI
September 24, 2004